



James Henry Russell  
President  
Texarkana College  
2500 N. Robison  
Texarkana, TX 75599

Dear President Henry:

We are thrilled to have Texarkana College as part of the Achieving the Dream (ATD) National Reform Network and are deeply appreciative of you and your colleagues' continued commitment to student success and equity. After reviewing your 2015 Annual Reflection and receiving input from your coaching team, we offer several observations in this letter about your institution's progress to date toward achieving the student success and equity goals identified by your team. We have arranged the review using the five broad principles that ATD views as key to institutional transformation, which also serve as the sections for your Principles Assessment Survey.

#### Reflections on the Five Achieving the Dream Principles

##### *Committed Leadership*

- We applaud your leadership team's commitment to ATD and for being proactive about leveraging internal and external resources to support the college's student success efforts.
- The college has demonstrated commitment to student success efforts by expanding the number of leaders tasked to support overall student success efforts and by creating implementation teams. Lori Rochelle has provided strong leadership in her first year as core team leader.
- We commend you for recognizing that strong leadership at all levels is critical for transformative change to occur. We encourage the college to continue engaging a broad group of faculty, staff, and other college stakeholders to take ownership of and help lead student success efforts.

##### *Use of Evidence to Improve Policies, Programs, and Services*

- Texarkana College has been effective in using the Data Bytes series for faculty and staff to present small segments of student success data to the entire college community. This effort represents an emerging promising practice that would be beneficial for other ATD colleges. We encourage you to continue the Data Bytes series and provide additional information on the Interventions Showcase to expand the conversation on relevant topics.
- The data team meeting was a great way to augment Texarkana College's culture of inquiry, with the entire data team fully engaged and asking excellent questions.

- We encourage you to continue anticipating potential challenges that may result from the Jenzabar conversion, particularly how it may affect the college's ability to retrieve, analyze, and communicate longitudinal data.

### *Broad Engagement*

- We commend the college for engaging a diverse group of college and community stakeholders to complete a new strategic plan that, among other things, prioritizes credential completion. More generally, we commend the college for engaging faculty and student services staff to assume leadership roles to support student success efforts.
- Texarkana College may consider additional ways to further engage students and the growing number of part-time faculty to support student success efforts. These efforts may include helping to develop interventions, serving on committees, and participating in focus groups.

### *Systemic Institutional Improvement*

- The college has repeatedly demonstrated its ability to successfully implement and scale student success innovations such as the New Mathways Project, the Quality Enhancement Plan, and the accelerated integrated reading and writing program to achieve transformative change. We commend the college for committing resources to help scale student success interventions and for using these interventions as opportunities to encourage unique collaboration between advisors, faculty, and administrators.
- We support your ambition for taking on three to five big institutional goals in the coming year and urge you to regularly assess where there may be competing priorities and areas of alignment.

### *Equity*

- Texarkana College has made significant efforts to engage the Hispanic community. We encourage you continue building new partnerships and engaging community stakeholders to help leverage the college's student success efforts.
- We applaud the college for pursuing efforts focused on generational poverty to help close achievement gaps at the college. The college is encouraged to continue identifying effective ways to make its staff more reflective of the surrounding community.
- The college may consider broadening opportunities for all students, especially those who have traditionally faced the most significant barriers to achievement, to voice their opinions about their college experience and participate in shaping student success interventions via student focus groups, student surveys and the like.

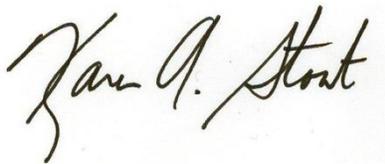
## Final Thoughts

Texarkana College continues to work hard and make steady progress toward implementing the necessary interventions to achieve systemic change. The college serves as a model example for promoting a culture that encourages the scaling of successful interventions so that more students may benefit and achievement gaps between student groups get smaller. We encourage you to continue testing and refining your interventions to help ensure they are working at maximum efficiency and supporting as many students as possible.

ATD is continuously building upon the institutional-change lessons learned from our network over the last ten years and, as a result, we have recently released the next iteration of our institutional-change framework. This framework identifies seven core capacity areas essential to growing colleges' abilities to impact student outcomes through systemic and sustainable practices. In the next year, ATD plans to release a new suite of tools and other resources to undergird colleges' implementation of and maturation in the core capacity areas. We urge you to make the most of the new framework and resources as you take your student success work to the next level.

We appreciate the hard work, time, and resources that your institution devotes to your Achieving the Dream efforts. We encourage you to discuss the feedback in this letter with your Leadership Coach and Data Coach, who are ready to support and guide you moving forward as it may assist you in shaping the direction of your ongoing student success efforts. We look forward to working with you in the coming year and welcome your questions and comments along the way.

Sincerely,



Dr. Karen A. Stout  
President & CEO



Cindy Lenhart  
Vice President for Community College Relations